

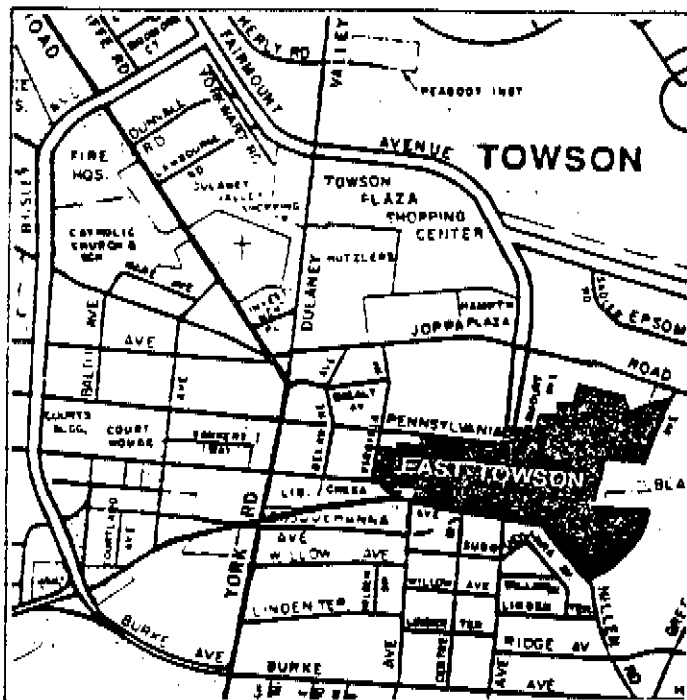
8. EAST TOWSON COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA

INTRODUCTION

The residents of East Towson have expressed their hopes and desires to preserve and restore this historic African American Community. This document is a plan to remain the oldest existing community in Towson.

Today, East Towson is a quiet residential community with tree lined streets located on the eastern fringe of the Towson Town Center (See Map 1). It enjoys many advantages due to its proximity to the central business district, conversely this proximity has generated development pressures and traffic issues related to its location.

The original property owners were freed slaves who until 1830 had been in service at the Hampton Mansion. The East Towson community is the only remaining portion of the larger African American community that from 1830 to 1960 extended as far as the York Road and Bosley Avenue area, in an area known as "Sandy Bottom," and in North Towson and West Towson. The North and West Towson African American communities no longer exist. The newly reconstructed Mt. Olive Baptist Church and church owned duplex located on the Southwest corner of York and Bosley are the visible reminders that the York Road commercial corridor was once home to a large African American community.¹



**EAST TOWSON
VICINITY MAP**

MAP 20

¹ The Evening Sun, "East Towson Natives Don't Want to Quit Tranquil Homes," p. B2, October 26, 1977.

I ACTION PLAN

The Baltimore County Master Plan 1989-2000 designated certain areas of the County as "enhancement areas." They were defined as "communities that have experienced a degree of physical decline and require County action to address specific problems such as poor condition of public facilities and private housing stock." (p.38)

Enhancement areas are located primarily in older areas of Baltimore County; some border commercial centers.

Action plans should be developed for these enhancement areas in order to stabilize these residential communities, and to continue to make them desirable places in which to live. They should have priority for the use of C.I.P. (Capital Improvement Program) funds for infrastructure improvements, open space acquisition, community services and facilities as well as for affordable housing. These improvements will foster civic involvement among the communities' current residents and may favorably influence prospective home buyers.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

The following chart indicates the population changes from 1970 - 1990 within the East Towson community (See Map 21). Residents report that the neighborhood population is aging.

| | 1970* | 1980* | 1990** |
|----------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| TOTAL POPULATION | 397 | 396 | 335 |
| OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS | 53 | 55 | 64 |
| RENTAL UNITS | 59 | 74 | 43 |
| VACANT UNITS | --- | --- | 4 |

*Data source - U. S. Census Bureau

**Population - U. S. Census Bureau
Housing tenure is estimated

PROCESS

The East Towson African American Community has developed a community conservation plan for this enhancement area in order to achieve neighborhood stabilization, redevelopment of affordable infill housing and adequate buffers and protection from commercial encroachment of the Towson commercial core.

A community work group comprised of East Towson property owners and residents worked to develop an action plan for strengthening the residential community. Meetings were held often and were open to the public. Business owners and developers were invited to discuss development proposals as well as short and long-term plans, for sites near the community; the seven who participated by giving presentations and answering questions were:

Baltimore County Dept. of Central Services
Baltimore County Revenue Authority
Baltimore Gas & Electric Company
Daft, McCune and Walker
Heritage Properties
Manor Care, Incorporated
Preferred Building Systems

ACTION PLAN COMPONENTS

A. LAND USE

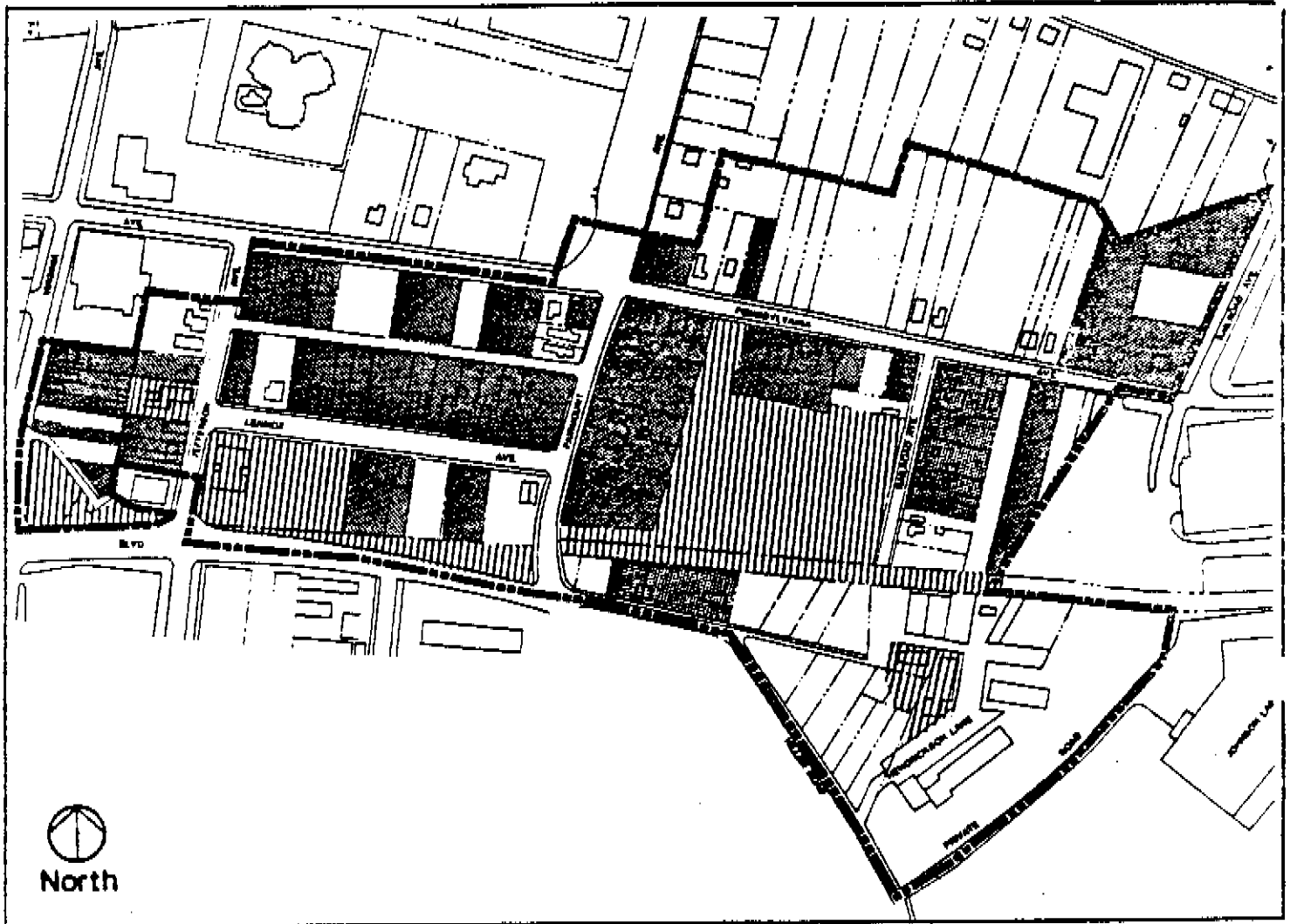
1. Existing Land use





The East Towson community conservation plan comprises approximately 31 acres ± with the predominant land use being single family and semi-detached dwellings and townhouses. Additional uses include the two churches, the St. James A.U.M.P. Church at 413 Jefferson Avenue and the Mt. Calvary A.M.E. Church at 300 Eudowood Lane and the Carver School at 300 Lennox Avenue. These institutional uses serve as anchors for this community. The Elks Lodge at 411 E. Pennsylvania Avenue is a fraternal organization that is an important social organization within the community.

Other non-residential land uses include the Baltimore Gas & Electric sub-station, Cambrill's Plumbing and Heating Contractor's office at 318 E. Pennsylvania Avenue and Technigraphics of Maryland at 398 Eudowood Lane.

2. Proposed Land Uses

Development of affordable housing on vacant parcels is the preferred use, since neighborhood stabilization is the primary objective of this Plan. The "transitional blocks" along the east side of Virginia Avenue and the south side of Pennsylvania should retain the RO zoning classification or be rezoned to ROA. The existing patterns of single family or semi-detached buildings should remain.



-  EAST TOWSON COMMUNITY BOUNDARY
-  OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING
-  RESIDENTIAL, NOT OWNER OCCUPIED
-  NON RESIDENTIAL

The Elks Lodge should remain at its present location on 411 E. Pennsylvania Avenue. Future plans to renovate or expand the Elks Lodge should be reviewed with the community prior to submittal to Baltimore County.

Expansion and renovation of the Mt. Calvary A.M.E. Church is highly desirable to better serve the needs of the community.

The Carver School should be renovated for use as a community/recreation center. A portion of the building is used for a Head Start program and meeting rooms and there is an existing outdoor recreation area. A structural assessment of the building is necessary to determine the feasibility of a full conversion.

The Baltimore Gas & Electric sub-station located in the area since 1952 should remain at its location on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue and the west side of Railroad Avenue. The Baltimore Gas & Electric Company will work with both the community and the Office of Planning & Zoning to provide better landscaping/screening around the perimeter of the substation.

Technigraphics of Maryland, formerly Maryland Etching, may remain at its location on Eudowood Lane. Future expansion plans should be reviewed with the East Towson community prior to their submittal to Baltimore County. In the long term, this site should be considered for housing as illustrated on the design plan on Map 24.

B. ZONING

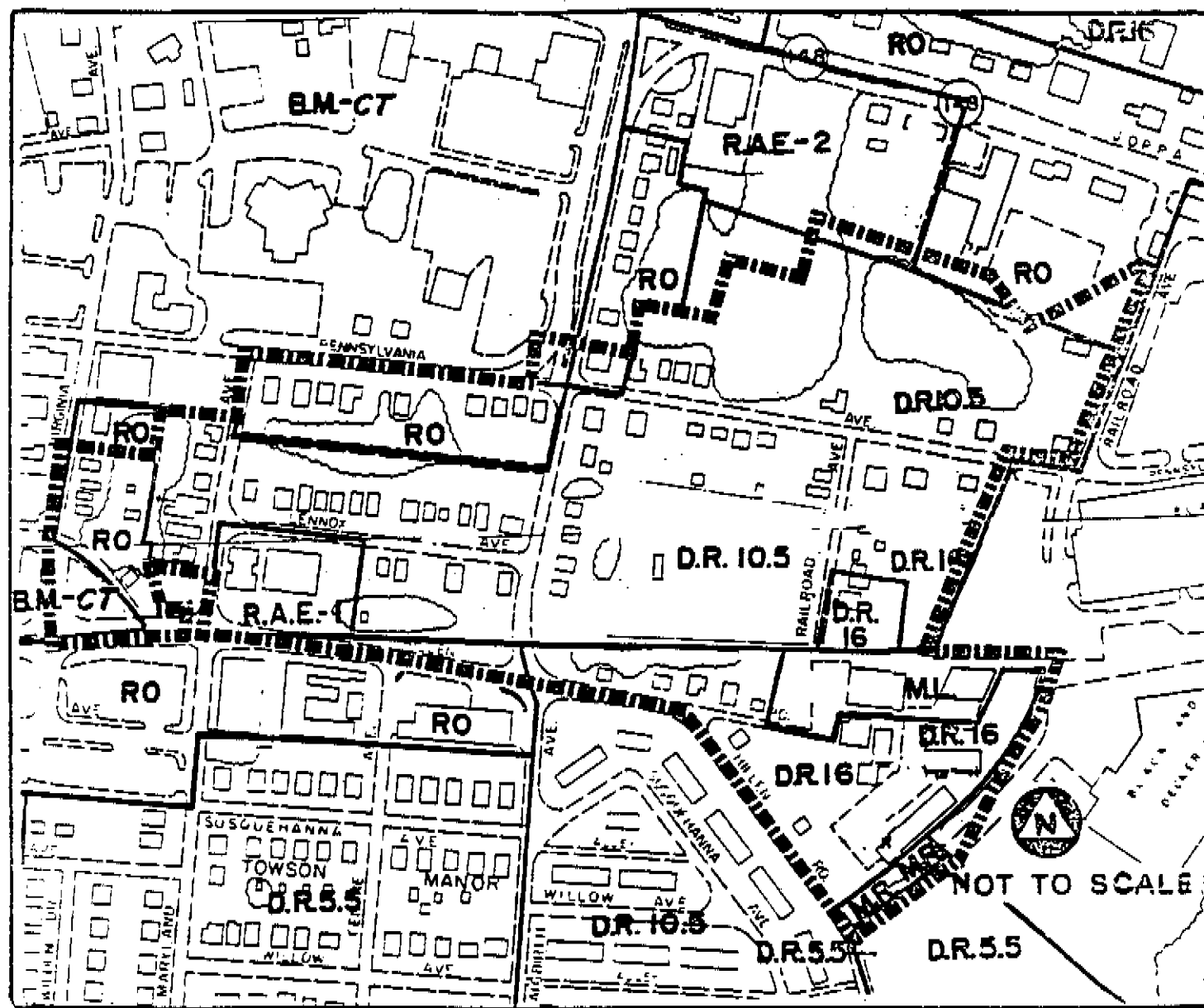
1. Existing Zoning

The use and density allowed by the existing zoning designations do not protect and preserve the remaining residential community. Previous Towson plans assumed that the "loop road" would be widened and completed and that the property within "the loop" would be commercially redeveloped.

From 1971-1980, the houses on Virginia, Jefferson and Lennox Avenues were zoned BM-CT, Business Major with a Town-Center district. The remaining houses were zoned DR 16, a classification that is more appropriate for garden apartments or multi-family dwellings than for single family and semi-detached housing.

In 1980, the RO (Residential Office) zone was established which was intended to provide a transition between commercial and residential zones. The BM-CT designation was rezoned and RO put in place on the east side of Virginia

MAP 22



Avenue and on the south side of Pennsylvania between Jefferson and Fairmount and along Fairmount Avenue north of Pennsylvania Avenue. Most of the remaining residential community was rezoned from DR 16 to DR 10.5, a category more in keeping with lot sizes and densities. DR 16 was retained for the Hendrickson Lane Apartment sites as well as the Mt. Calvary A.M.E. Church.

Generally, the RO zoned parcels have not been converted to office uses, but have remained residential. These homes form a significant part of the community. There is no effective transition from the Town Center to the residential community.

Since 1980, zoning patterns have remained essentially the same except in 1988 when the Carver School was rezoned from DR 10.5 to RAE 1 in an effort to redevelop the site with elderly housing.

The East Towson community plan area consists of the following zoning classifications: RO (Residential Office), DR 10.5, (10.5 dwelling units per acre), DR 16, (16 dwelling units per acre) and RAE 1, (40 dwelling units per acre) and ML, (Manufacturing Light). (See Map 22.)

The approximate acreage by zone is as follows:

| <u>Zoning Classification</u> | <u>Gross Acreage ±</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| RO | 4.16 |
| DR 10.5 | 18.7 |
| DR 16 | 5.8 |
| RAE 1 | 1.15 |
| ML | 1.07 |

2. Proposed Zoning

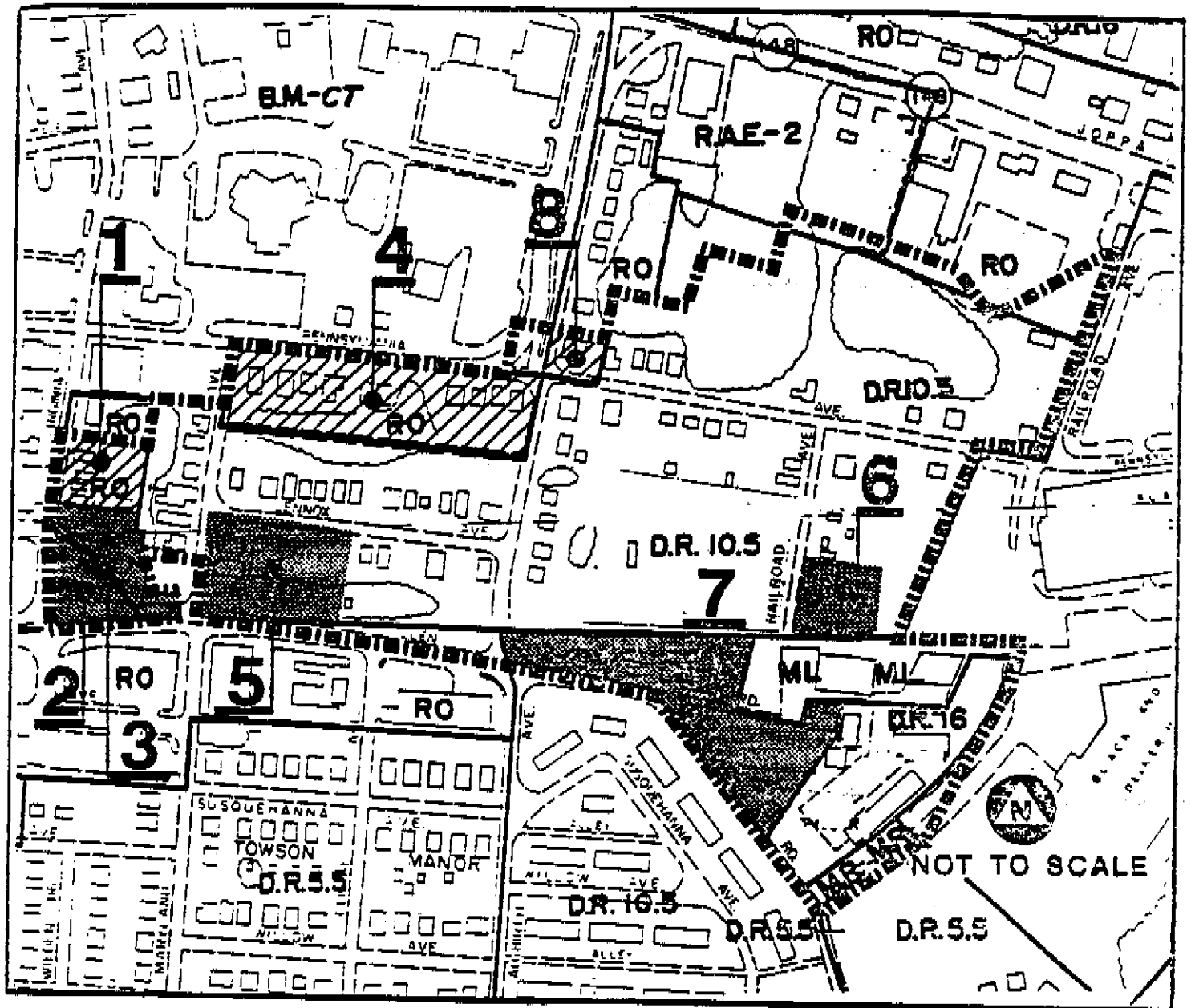
The zoning should provide opportunities for infill housing, renovation/restoration of the Carver School for use as a community building, and the expansion of Mt. Calvary A.M.E. Church. Zoning should provide an effective transition from the town center to the residential community as well as stability for the residential community. Infill housing should be in accordance with design guidelines which will be developed in the Design portion of the plan.



The following zoning changes should occur through the 1992 Comprehensive Zoning process (See Map 23.)

| Ex. Zoning | Prop Zoning | Location | Rationale |
|---------------|-------------|---|---|
| 1. RO | RO or ROA | e/s Virginia Ave., 406, - 410 Virginia Avenue | To provide a better transition from the town center; Class A office buildings, or residential uses desirable |
| 2. RO & BM-CT | DR 10.5 | n/e corner Towsontown & Virginia (Revenue Authority Property) | To allow for the construction of a semi-detached house and single family house, to anchor this corner |
| 3. RO | DR 10.5 | 133 E. Chesapeake Avenue | To be compatible with the predominant zoning in the community. |
| 4. RO | RO or ROA | s/s Pennsylvania Avenue between Fairmount and Jefferson | To provide a better transition from town center; Class A Office Buildings or residential uses are desirable. |
| 5. RAE 1 | DR 10.5 | s/s Lennox Ave. e/s Jefferson Carver School | To be compatible with the predominant zoning within the community. To allow for full use as a Community Center. |
| 6. DR 16 | DR 10.5 | e/s Railroad Avenue | To be compatible with the predominant zoning within the community |
| 7. DR 16 | DR 10.5 | s/s Eudowood Lane, n/s Hillen Road | To be compatible with the predominant zoning within the community (Mt. Calvary is acquiring these properties for church expansion) |
| 8. RO | RO or ROA | n/e corner Fairmount & Pennsylvania | To provide a better transition between the adjacent RO zoning and the residential community, Class A Office Buildings or residential uses are desirable |

East Towson Proposed Zoning

MAP 23



-  Proposed R.O. or R.O.A.
-  Proposed DR.10.5

Technigraphics of Maryland, formerly Maryland Etching Company, occupies the ML zoned property on Eudowood Lane. The ML zoning should remain in place for the present time. However, Baltimore County Economic Development Commission and the Office of Planning and Zoning should assist the printing company in relocating to a more suitable site outside the East Towson community. If this relocation occurs, rezoning the site to DR 10.5 is appropriate.